

In the United States Court of Federal Claims
OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS
No. 21-1805V

VIRGINIA WASZAK,

Petitioner,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES,

Respondent.

Chief Special Master Corcoran

Filed: May 20, 2024

Amy A. Senerth, Muller Brazil, LLP, Dresher, PA, for Petitioner.

Lauren Kells, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, for Respondent.

DECISION ON ATTORNEY'S FEES AND COSTS¹

On September 3, 2021, Virginia Waszak filed a petition for compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. §300aa-10, *et seq.*² (the "Vaccine Act"). Petitioner alleged that she suffered a left shoulder injury related to vaccine administration a defined Table injury, which was caused in fact by the influenza vaccine she received on December 19, 2019. Petition, ECF No. 1. On January 5, 2024, I issued a decision awarding compensation to Petitioner based on the parties' stipulation. ECF No. 26.

¹Because this Decision contains a reasoned explanation for the action taken in this case, it must be made publicly accessible and will be posted on the United States Court of Federal Claims' website, and/or at <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/uscourts/national/cofc>, in accordance with the E-Government Act of 2002. 44 U.S.C. § 3501 note (2018) (Federal Management and Promotion of Electronic Government Services). **This means the Decision will be available to anyone with access to the internet.** In accordance with Vaccine Rule 18(b), Petitioner has 14 days to identify and move to redact medical or other information, the disclosure of which would constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy. If, upon review, I agree that the identified material fits within this definition, I will redact such material from public access.

² National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, Pub. L. No. 99-660, 100 Stat. 3755. Hereinafter, for ease of citation, all section references to the Vaccine Act will be to the pertinent subparagraph of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa (2018).

Petitioner has now filed a motion for attorney's fees and costs, requesting an award of \$18,780.65 (representing \$16,927.10 in fees plus \$1,853.55 in costs). Application for Attorneys' Fees and Costs ("Motion") filed March 25, 2024, ECF No. 31. Furthermore, counsel for Petitioner represents that Petitioner incurred no personal out-of-pocket expenses. *Id.* at 2. Respondent filed no response thereafter.

I have reviewed the billing records submitted with Petitioner's request. In my experience, the request appears reasonable, and I find no cause to reduce the requested hours or rates. The rates requested for work performed through the end of 2023 are reasonable and consistent with our prior determinations, and will therefore be adopted. Petitioner has also requested the hourly rate of \$400 for 2024 work performed by attorney Amy Senerth, representing a rate increase of \$25. Motion at 1. I find this rate reasonable and will award the attorney's fees requested. And all time billed to the matter was also reasonably incurred. Furthermore, Petitioner has provided supporting documentation for all claimed costs, Motion at 15-31. And Respondent offered no specific objection to the rates or amounts sought.

The Vaccine Act permits an award of reasonable attorney's fees and costs for successful claimants. Section 15(e). Accordingly, I hereby GRANT Petitioner's Motion for attorney's fees and costs. **I award a total of \$18,780.65 (representing \$16,927.10 in fees plus \$1,853.55 in costs) as a lump sum in the form of a check jointly payable to Petitioner and Petitioner's counsel, Amy A. Senerth.** In the absence of a timely-filed motion for review (see Appendix B to the Rules of the Court), the Clerk of Court shall enter judgment in accordance with this decision.³

IT IS SO ORDERED.

s/Brian H. Corcoran
Brian H. Corcoran
Chief Special Master

³ Pursuant to Vaccine Rule 11(a), the parties may expedite entry of judgment by filing a joint notice renouncing their right to seek review.